DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 116 358 95 EA 007 846

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TITLE Striving Toward Dialogue. A National Forum on Educational Accountability. Denver, Colorado, 1975.
INSTITUTION American Federation of Teachers, Washington, D.C.; Colorado State Dept. of Education, Denver. Cooperative Accountability Project.; National Education Association, Washington, D.C.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 75
NOTE 48p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.95 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; Accountability; Achievement Tests; Conference Reports; *Educational Accountability; *Educational Assessment; Educational Objectives; Elementary Secondary Education; Evaluation; *Evaluation Methods; Teacher Attitudes; *Teacher Participation; Teacher Role; *Testing

ABSTRACT

This is the report of a conference on accountability that was sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education and administered by the Cooperative Accountability Project with the advice and assistance of the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers. The purpose of the conference was to provide a meeting place in which teachers, other education professionals, and laymen could enter into substantive dialogue on accountability. It was hoped that those concerned could discuss their similarities and differences and find a means of having a dialogue about those differences. Four principal topics were covered: the goals and objectives of accountability, the means by which the objectives can be accomplished, assessment and evaluation, and the question of who should be accountable, to whom, and for what. Two speakers, one representing teachers, addressed each of the topics and then the participants divided into small groups to attempt to find their areas of agreement and disagreement on the topics. The report is made up of summaries of the speakers, the small-group discussions, and the related events. Also included is an evaluation of the conference and of the positions of those who attended. (Author/IRT)

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Striving Toward Dialogue

A National Forum on
Educational Accountability
Denver, Colorado
1975

EA 007 846

The National Forum on Educational Accountability was sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education and administered by the Cooperative Accountability Project with the advice and assistance of the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The director of the Cooperative Accountability Project wishes to express his gratitude to all those who gave of their time and effort to plan and conduct the first National Forum on Educational Accountability. To the best of our knowledge the Forum provided the first opportunity for representatives of various educational and noneducational groups to assemble for dialogue on a controversial topic of major current significance to the educational community. Here was a setting which allowed basic interchange of ideas, attitudes, and interpretations on the part of people most directly involved in the educational process and its outcomes. One of the resolutions passed by the participants stated in part that "the basic idea of the Forum (i.e., that educators and lay citizens alike, holding different points of view, can solve major educational issues when given the opportunity for dialogue, discussion and decision making) can be a model for future conferences."

The leadership and direction given to the Forum was provided by those listed here.

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U.S. Commissioner of Education

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The Setting

The educational accountability movement had been gaining momentum for at least five years, sometimes exerting massive effect on the educational process and educational funding.

It seemed to be time for leaders in the movement and laymen to sit down with teachers and talk about it.

This was the simple and straightforward reason for the National Forum on Educational Accountability, conducted in Denver, Colorado, on May 8-9, 1975.

Since the use of the word "accountability" with respect to education emerged into public consciousness a half-decade ago, much activity has centered about it. As numerous speakers at the Forum were to point out, thousands of articles have been written about accountability; debate has flared about it; some form of accountability has been written into the statutes of more than 30 states and adopted by rule or regulation in still others.

"Some form of accountability?" Aye, there's the rub.

For, by and large, the educational experts were in fair agreement on the requirements of accountability. But not all who sallied forth under the banner of accountability paid much attention to these requirements. In some states, for instance, an "accountability" law simply ordered a statewide testing program in the basic skills, permitting the comparisons between schools and districts and groups of children which are anathema to many professional educators. In other states, broad gauge programs were established which met all the requirements of the accountability definition; and, as the states are diverse, so were these programs.

What are the elements of this common definition among the experts on accountability? A beginning-to-end logical process described in homely terms as follows:

1. Decide where you want to go (in terms of goals, which are broad, and objectives, which are reachable subsets of the goals).

2. Find out how far you are from reaching these objectives (through an assessment of needs).

3. Decide what steps you should take (programs and strategies) to close the gap between where you find you are and the objectives you want to reach.

4. From time to time, measure your progress toward the objectives (through assessment and evaluation).

5. Calculate how much it has cost to make that progress.

6. Report your findings to those who will make the decisions about how best to strengthen the program's effectiveness the next time around (feedback and recycle).

Implicit in this process are two assumptions: first, that you are doing all this to improve the quality of education and increase the level of student achievement; and second, that your findings will be used to make bett

informed decisions about how the educational process is to be improved in the future.

None of which sounds reprehensible in itself.

But there were problems. Some were shared by teachers and other education professionals—such as legislation mandating something they knew wasn't really accountability and that they thought might be harmful. Such as the thinly veiled threat, here and there, that heads would roll as soon as assessment results came in. Such as indications that state financing might be contingent on test results.

Some problems were more specific to teachers, such as the fear that theirs would be the heads set a-rolling (they are, after all, the front line troops). Such as their indignation and concern that they weren't much involved in setting accountability systems—but they were to be deeply involved in implementing them.

Underlining these concerns was the fact that the accountability movement did not start among teachers, nor even among school districts. Rather it came into being when the public, concerned about ever-rising school costs and reports of poor student performance, began to demand, through their legislators, evidence of the actual effects of educational expenditures to support the schoolmen's perennial *prima facie* argument that more dollars always equal better learning.

Accountability in education subsequently was popularized by the U.S. Office of Education (USOE); taken up as a cause by other groups who saw in it the possibility of a better educational bang for the buck; and developed largely by state departments of education, under the impetus of federal grants, legislative demand, or their own interest.

The U.S. Office of Education and the state departments of education are not seen by most teachers as their staunchest allies. Legislators are seldom their favorite people. So a lot of teachers didn't like what they saw.

They were to see more of it, however. In 1972, with federal funding, the Cooperative Accountability Project (CAP) was established: a consortium of seven states (Colorado, Florida, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin) formed to develop comprehensive guidelines, informational publications and model programs to assist state and local education agencies in making meaningful accountings of their efforts, both internally and for the public.

CAP proved effective in all three components of its mission—guidelines, publications, model programs. Accountability was becoming more widespread and more visible; and still teachers didn't think they were being permitted to participate properly.

Teacher associations—national, state and local—began to rumble out warnings. Their general theme was this: Accountability programs had better be educationally acceptable; teachers are not the only accountable people involved in education; teachers must not be evaluated, nor rewarded nor punished, on the basis of student achievement tests; and anyone who really wanted an accountability program to fly had better involve teachers in its development.

At about this time, the U.S. Office of Education was inviting state representatives to Washington, one by one, to talk about a number of things, including accountability.

It began to hear the alarm bells. It perceived that all

was not right with the world of accountability—and that perhaps one of the principal reasons was the teachers' claim of nonparticipation and their resulting latent hostility.

With prompting from teacher groups, USOE in November 1974 began to consider convening a Forum at which teachers, other education professionals, and concerned laymen could enter into substantive dialogue on accountability. USOE turned for particular assistance to three groups: the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT)—the two organizations without whose cooperation any kind of teacher participation would seem shallow—and the Cooperative Accountability Project.

It was soon agreed that there would be a National Forum on Educational Accountability, sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education, and administered by CAP, with the advice and assistance of the NEA and the AFT.

Guidelines were also agreed on. First of all there was established a Steering Committee representing all the groups, which worked out the proportions of representation, and agreed on the program format.

Half the participants were to be teachers, selected by AFT and NEA. The other half represented a wide range of interests: American Association of School Administrators, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Council for American Private Education, Education Commission of the States, National Assessment of Educational Progress, National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Association of State Boards of Education, Performance-Based Teacher Education, Congressional Education Committee, National Institute for Education, U.S. Government Accounting Office, National Alliance of Businessmen, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Urban Coalition; and various State Departments of Education and legislative representatives. Parents and students also were to be represented.

The format of the Forum was agreed upon. There were to be four principal topics, each to be introduced by two speakers—one presenting a teacher-oriented point of view and one another view. After these presentations, participants were then to divide into small groups of about a dozen persons and attempt to find their areas of agreement and disagreement on the topic. They would then go back into general session to hear the next two speakers on the next topic, return to their small groups, and so on.

For the small groups, facilitators were to be appointed—teachers with some experience in group discussion, charged with the responsibility of keeping the talk moving forward constructively. Also each group was to have a recorder—a graduate student from one of the nearby institutions of higher education—to write notes on the progress of the meetings and deliver them with comment to the writers of the Forum report. Facilitators and recorders were to attend an opening training session conducted by experts in group process; thus fortified, they were to help the groups to decide and articulate their views on each topic.

Consensus was the goal: What can teachers and nonteachers, sitting together in an informal atmosphere, agree on with respect to educational accountability?

And so the stage was set.

Prologue

In the latter-day spirit of bringing some good news and some bad news, Dr. Calvin M. Frazier, Colorado Commissioner of Education, opened the Forum with a quick review of the past five years in order to lay the groundwork for "a mid-decade evaluation of this educational concept," accountability.

Accountability has long been with education, he noted, from the early days when a teacher received room and board from parents in exchange for teaching their children. Such a teacher shifted his residency periodically from family to family—but "was always under scrutiny . . . it was a simple accountability cycle."

From that simple cycle has grown an educational process in the United States with some 17,000 school districts, some two million teachers, some 45 million public school pupils.

"The direct, simple accountability process of the early years has not been lost," Dr. Frazier said, "but it's safe to say that the process had been buried in an organizational maze until Lessinger and others recently began suggesting this as a concept or idea that educators must address—or face a further loss of credibility with the public. Thus begins our 'era of accountability.' "

Accountability has made substantial strides, Frazier said. The federal commitment to it is deep and growing—"most federal programs require specification of objectives, activities designed to achieve these ends, an evaluation plan, and a reporting procedure."

At the state level there is a great variation in approach, he said, noting that while more than 30 states have enacted some kind of accountability legislation, still others have established accountability procedures through rules and regulations rather than legislation.

He identified the principal accountability problems he has observed through Colorado's participation in the Cooperative Accountability Project as the following:

- Legislators, once optimistic that accountability programs would be the avenue to deeper understanding of a major tax-consumer, are now inclined to be frustrated: "What might have been a means of improving the relationship between legislators and educators appears now to have become one more indication to some of the legislative skeptics that educators are foot-draggers and not to be fully trusted."
- Administrators feel threatened by a loss of local autonomy under a system imposed by the state.
- Teachers find themselves on occasion the chief implementers of a system developed without their involvement—"a little like sitting in the eye of the hurricane, knowing that you are soon to be pounded by the winds."
- Students have been subjected to increasing numbers of tests—and sometimes to a subtle change in curriculum to reflect the more measurable objectives.

• "Long smoldering concerns about the sophistication of our testing programs have surfaced in recent years because of the key role of evaluation in the accountability process."

Problems, yes—but, "This conference is designed to bring together a cross section of professionals and lay leadership to look at some of the issues. Heavy priority has been given to the involvement of teacher representatives since it was felt that this voice was somewhat neglected in the past. Some anger and frustration will surface—and this is good, if it can be a transition to the resolution of some basic problems."

Dr. Frazier's introductory remarks did, indeed, foreshadow the direction of the conference:

- The inevitablity of accountability
- The difficulty of defining it, in light of its many applications
- Discontent with tests
- The long non-involvement of teachers and teacher groups
- The surfacing of anger and frustration
- And—perhaps—"a transition to the resolution of some basic problems."

All unwittingly, his remarks may, too, have assisted in the early surfacing of anger and frustration.

On the advance program, approved by the Steering Committee and distributed to Forum participants, his address was billed as "Greetings and General Orientation to Forum." On the actual program, however, his address was changed to "Accountability in Action"—a more substantive title which indeed was mirrored in a substantive speech.

This change was made with reason, but there were immediate grumblings that the Forum would hear from three nonteachers before it heard from the first teacher. In the still tender and tentative rapprochement of teachers and others on the delicate subject of accountability, this order did not go unnoticed, but inspired a rumble of discontent that by day's end had grown to a roar.

The reason for the change in program became clear with the second speaker. This was to have been U.S. Commissioner of Education Terrel H. Bell, speaking on "Accountability in Action"—the subject on which Dr. Frazier spoke instead. This was because Dr. Bell, tied up in Washington, could not make it to the Forum.

His place on the program was taken by Thomas J. Burns, Acting Associate Commissioner for State and Local Educational Programs, whose topic was "Accountability: An Agenda for the Future."

His central plea was for full participation in establishing accountability for the improvement of education. Noting the composition of the Forum, he said, "We have simulated each of the elements of a local community at this conference—but elevated its representatives by selecting their best leaders and national spokesmen."

As have many spokesmen on the subject, he noted that accountability is not new: "From decade to decade, the specific sense in which the schools are held to be accountable to the people shifts, but the principle of accountability remains unchanged." Today's sense of responsibility, he said, includes "responsibility not just for the student and his or her development, but also responsibility for the steady growth, development and performance of the teacher, principal, superintendent and community leader

who serve the educational enterprise."

Again echoing other spokesmen, he referred to the many guises of accountability—a condition he described as appropriate to a participatory society. All opinions must be weighed, he said—not that all are of equal validity, but because only in open dialogue can each be weighed against the touchstone of providing quality education.

He proceeded to define the purpose of the Forum:

"The challenge facing us during these next two days is to identify those components of accountability where our philosophies are compatible. Hopefully, this will provide a base from which other more controversial components can be identified and discussed with the aim of ameliorating some of the differences. It just might be that many of our opinions are not as diverse as we suspect."

In approaching that challenge, Burns said, the Forum participants might perceive that there is ". . . a common mood from which we can derive a common view about many of the expressions of discontent and demands for change that satellite the concept of accountability . . . This new mood demands results—pupil performance results.

"It demands that students learn as a result of the educational investment . . . It is true that many students have been adequately served by our schools. But it also is true that some students have not been adequately served by our schools. And the public has the right to ask the question, 'Why?' "

He suggested that one reason for the public demand is the success of the American system in producing well-educated adults who know how to ask questions; and another reason might be "the long-held tradition in American education of letting the public only part way into the schools . . . To respond to this disenchantment and move beyond it to establish a new stability in public support will be difficult. It will require new candor."

Burns defined the current goal as seeking "the highest quality of education at a politically feasible expenditure level.

"To be responsive to this challenge posed in an age of expanding technology and endless innovation, the educator must be a full partner and participant of planned change. The educator must assume a flexible posture while being alert to opportunities for adapting old methods to new needs, and must insure that such adaptation occurs.

"For each change or innovation, there must be an arrangement to check whether improvement results. Something must be measured. Moreover, all the participants in such programs should assist in the design of the evaluation. Broad participation in the design of both innovations and their evaluation is essential if the work to be done is to become more rationally related to explicit goals, and if, in turn the goals themselves are to be realistic."

Thus did the Acting Associate Commissioner—who had been centrally involved in the calling of the Forum—stand in ably for the absent Commissioner. But the absence itself lit a fuse that was destined to smolder for a bit—then leap into flame when further non-appearances of scheduled speakers seemed to denigrate the work and devalue the time of conferees whose nerves were wearing thin. It did not particularly help that all the no-shows were nonteachers.

Goals and Objectives

With the last words of the prologue fading away—Mr. Burns' closing question, "Can we begin building such an agenda during this conference?"—Dr. Arthur R. Olson, director of the Cooperative Accountability Project and director of the Forum, took the floor.

He explained briefly how the Steering Committee had organized the Forum around four topics:

1. Goals and Objectives
2. By What Means Shall the Objectives Be Accomplished?
3. Assessment and Evaluation
4. Who Should be Accountable to Whom and For What?

The stage for each topic would be set, Olson said, by two speakers, one presenting a teacher viewpoint, the other the viewpoint from another perspective. Then the participants would break up into a dozen small groups to discuss the topic. In each small group, a teacher would serve as a facilitator to keep the discussion moving in somewhat orderly fashion. In addition, each group was assigned a recorder to set down what its members said and what they decided.

To aid their discussion, all participants were provided prepared notebooks containing, with other Forum materials, copies of each speaker's planned presentation, and an outline of each topic with suggested questions for discussion. The groups were also given forms on which to enter their judgments, including a summary form with three headings: Things We Agree On, Things We Disagree On, and Recommendations for Narrowing Disagreements.

It was an orderly format, and one on which there was no objection or disagreement from the floor—yet.

In accordance with the plan, the two speeches on the first topic were then delivered.

The first was by Charles W. Nix, Associate Commissioner for Planning and Evaluation for the Texas Education Agency. (It might be kept in mind that he was the third consecutive nonteacher to address the Forum, with no teacher yet heard from; and by this time some teachers were becoming restive.)

Mr. Nix gave a scholarly and distinctly directive summary of the standing of goals and objectives in the whole area of educational accountability. He outlined the concerns and the choices, and explained the choices he would make.

He defined schooling as "an open system . . . a series of interrelated working parts, which has certain things going into it (inputs), being treated in certain ways (processes), and certain other things coming out as a result (outputs). This kind of system also has a feedback mechanism to describe these outputs, processes, and inputs so that we can decide whether we need to make

changes and what kinds of changes would improve the performance of the system in attaining its results. The kind of system we have in schooling is a very human one: teachers working closely with their students, using materials and time in planned ways, in order to bring about certain desired learning results among the students . . . It is the outputs of the education system that are its goals and objectives. They deal with the question: 'Where do we want to get to?' "

Mr. Nix identified eight persistent concerns in the area of educational goals and objectives—and his recommendation on all but one of them.

Concern 1: What's the distinction between goals and objectives? Recommendation: A goal is the broadest statement of expected outcomes, and an objective is a specific part of one of the goals.

Concern 2: In terms of whose performance should educational goals and objectives be stated—student, teacher, organization as a whole? Recommendation: "I find it most useful to assume that goals and objectives of education are solely student learning outcomes, and that every other condition we strive to bring about—effective teaching, relevant teaching materials, sound administration, and adequate financing of education—are means to the ends of student growth and development."

Concern 3: What should be included in the goals and objectives for schooling? Recommendation: "The goals for schooling should cover all the various possibilities for learning which should legitimately be offered to students, and should avoid including aspects of student development which are not feasible to offer. Some of the elements of these goals will be intended to be mastered by all, or nearly all, students—the core goals. In addition, the goals will contain a large number of elective elements which each student may or may not seek to accomplish."

Concern 4: It is relatively easy to gain acceptance of broadly stated goals for student learning in school, but harder to get agreement on more tangible statements about exactly what it means for a student to make progress toward one of the major goals. Recommendation: None at the moment.

Concern 5: Some goals lend themselves more readily to specific objective statements than others: "Those goals that express expected learnings in the basic communications and mathematics skills can be detailed more readily; those in domains such as citizenship, esthetic appreciation and realistic self-concept give us considerably more trouble." Recommendation: "We can benefit by developing detailed, specific objectives where this is feasible. But we must be satisfied with less quantitative statements of expected student learning in other equally important areas."

Concern 6: There is confusion about whether goals and objectives are statements of intended accomplishment or guaranteed outcomes. Recommendation: "It is difficult, if not impossible, to guarantee results in areas of human services. No physician guarantees a cure, and no counselor guarantees to solve a client's problems. The other view of the role of objectives makes more sense to me. Those who carry out the process of schooling will do everything within their power and competence as professional practitioners to bring about this genuinely intended outcome, and will continuously strive to improve their instructional methods if the outcome is not being produced."

Concern 7: Is the teacher solely responsible for bringing about the intended learning results among students? Recommendation: "The system of education is extensive, and has many working parts: the teacher, the staff of the campus and the school district, the local board of trustees, the state legislature and the state education agency, the federal government, and very importantly, the student and his or her parents. All of these elements combine, for better or for worse, as the total system of schooling aimed at bringing about student learning goals and objectives. Responsibility is shared, and all members of the team must play effective roles if the results are to be attained."

Concern 8: Are objectives to be criteria of mastery for the individual student, or for a specified proportion of a group of students? Recommendation: "The objective can be very useful as a target for mastery by the preponderance of a group all at once."

Mr. Nix also gave the Forum further clear distinctions between goals and objectives.

Goals: "Those broad areas or domains of human knowledge, skills, competence, values and attitudes which are judged to be appropriate outcomes of a student's participation in schooling. They are the general directions, the broad avenues of development, of the human character and intellect."

Objectives: "Tangible statements of human characteristics which are derived from these nonspecific goals . . . Objectives should be quantifiable and measurable, or at least, observable on a systematic basis by a trained observer." He set them at three levels: The exit objective, to be attained over a multi-year period such as by the time of exit from high school; term or annual objectives, smaller increments of the exit objectives, intended to be accomplished in a school year or term; and performance or behavioral objectives, the most tangible and measurable, intended as the learning outcome of a short unit of instruction, such as a week or a single class period.

Mr. Nix was equally specific in his ideas about who sets goals and objectives.

As to goals—the state authority establishes goals for the state as a whole; the local authority adopts or amends these to fit its own community situation; the federal government has inputs; teachers participate in setting goals, as do parents and students. Goals, however, "simply must be put into place by an appropriate policy authority. They cannot be left to individual decisions by students, parents, teachers, or other individuals who work in the educational system. Chaos would result."

As to objectives—the more concrete they get, the more they fall into the domain of the professional educator. Guidelines might be: Exit objectives to be set by the administration of the local school district, in consultation with the teaching profession; term and annual objectives to be set by the teachers, working with the administration; performance objectives to be set by the teacher, with advice from his direct supervisor, the students, and perhaps parents.

The Forum participants had a lot to chew on from Mr. Nix' thorough analysis. Many forgot to chew, as they heard immediately thereafter from the first teacher representative—Girard D. Hottleman, Assistant Executive Secretary for Programs, Massachusetts Teachers Association.

Those teachers in the audience who were expecting a statement of the teachers' position on accountability were surprised, but could hardly be disappointed. What they heard was a ringing defense of the child, and a sublime scorn for any accountability model which moved him from the center of power as well as of attention. (And this, Mr. Hottleman made perfectly clear, applies to any accountability model he had heard of.)

His short but pungent speech was based on an ancient and effective method of argumentation: "There are two opening possibilities. If you choose A, you must proceed here. If you choose B, you have given up this." (This was made manifest in the title he chose for his address: "Setting Goals for Accountability Models—Problems in Sequence, Logic and Consistency.")

He cheerfully announced himself an opponent of most of what has happened in the name of accountability—because everyone busily started measuring before anyone defined what it was they wanted to be measured.

What's education about, he demanded? Well, obviously, behavior modification. To what end?

Some say to fit students to society. That means chipping away the rough edges of individuals until they fit the model.

Some say to fit society to students. That means chipping away the conforming influences of society until the necessary degree of individuality is reached.

Those who see education as fitting the student to society will set up an hierarchical accountability model, respecting the rights of elders to make decisions for the young and working downward from a chain of command. That model tends to be specific and concrete.

For holders of the opposing view, the accountability model would "spontaneously generate from the students and not the authorities. Outcomes would be individual, sanctions self-imposed, and the system responsible to the student rather than to those who currently create and run the system."

Hottleman left no room for doubt as to his position: "Education is for the child . . . the child has the right to decide what he ought to be. If education is truly child-centered then the parents, the teachers, various government establishments have the right to enter into dialogue with the students, but not to compel them into *a priori* molds . . . If we carry this logic to its inevitable end, the students would adopt goals, design the curriculum, hire the staff, and allocate the resources. As you can see, logic can lead to some strange places. That is probably why we don't use too much of it."

Hottleman went on to define roles of others in child-centered education. In fact, he defined them three times—in detail, in summary, and in tighter summary. Here is his second statement, the first level of summary:

"The accountability model would look something like this: Students would set the goals and objectives for themselves. Teachers would coordinate the process of individual goal-setting, and help translate this process into productive group activity. Administrators would coordinate resource distribution to maximize the achievement of teacher-student requests. School boards would work toward the creation of policy to free the individual from the control of others and to communicate the fiscal needs of the school district to other members of the community in order to achieve voluntary support for the costs of the process."

Forget about accountability models, Hottleman urged,

until you have determined the reality of the educational model. "Let's first of all design healthy schools and then, if there's some value to it, let's go after the accountability issue."

This all constituted a sufficient load for the Forum participants to carry into their first group sessions; 12 groups, each with from a dozen to 15 members, membership carefully divided to reflect the overall Forum proportions.

They had heard where accountability stands today and how it got there; an agenda for accountability in the future; an analysis of goals and objectives as a starting point for accountability, and of special problems and concerns about goals and objectives; and a broad attack on serving the wrong clientele.

Now, in theory, the small groups were to spend about two and a half hours discussing Goals and Objectives within this outlined framework:

1. At what level should goals be developed? (National, state, school district, individual school building, other?)

2. If goal development is important at more than one level within a state, should the goals be identical, or nearly identical, at all levels at which they are developed?

3. What groups and individuals should have major responsibility for determining goals for education? (Students, teachers, parents, other citizens, local board of education, state board of education, state department of education, legislatures, federal agencies, professional associations, others?) In what role—as advisors, decision makers, implementers? When in the process?

4. How general (or specific) should goals for education be?

5. What groups and individuals should have major responsibility for determining objectives for education? (Same sub-groups and sub-questions as above.)

6. What groups should have major responsibility for determining school objectives? (Same group listing as above.)

7. How specific (or general) should educational objectives be?

8. Should objectives be stated in terms of behaviors expected of (a) administrators, (b) teachers, (c) students, in accomplishing them?

9. If not in terms of the above, how should objectives be stated?

10. If used, should behavioral objectives for teachers be quantified? If so, on what basis?

11. If not, how should appropriate behavior be judged?

12. Should objectives be identical for all students? If not, who should determine what are appropriate objectives for which students?

13. Should objectives for administrators and any others be explicitly stated at the outset?

The theory cracked a bit from the beginning. In the first instance, the groups had only a bit more than half the allotted two and a half hours to devote to these subjects—a result of such usual conference exigencies as late starts, long speeches, long lunch. In the second instance, a good number of the participants weren't ready to deal with what to their minds were sub-questions. They first wanted to talk about accountability, what it is, and whether they like it.

But with the goodwill common among those involved in education who are asked to discuss something important, and with patient suggestions from a number of facilitators, most of the groups plunged into the subject, the outline and the questions.

Samples of their discussions follow:

- *Parents, given choices and options by professional educators, may be able to choose goals for their children, but not specific educational objectives.* (Group 12)
- *Is there more consensus about uniformity of national goals than we know? Should schools be held accountable only for those goals that are measurable?* (Group 11)
- *Not certain of the role of students in goal setting, even in an advisory capacity; there are problems of maturity and of the nature of their involvement.* (Group 8)
- *When is a student mature enough to take part in this process? Age 16? Age 6?* (Group 10)
- *At the national level, the goals are the 3R's and healthy regard for others, desire for learning, and self-concept. These last are the silent curriculum.* (Group 5)
- *Teachers don't know the goals of their district because they have no part in setting them.* (Group 5)
- *The writer of objectives ultimately controls society.* (Group 5)
- *The hidden influence in setting goals is the importance of getting into college or getting a job.* (Group 5)
- *Goals and objectives must come from the bottom up.* (Group 4)
- *Goals should be general at the national level, less so at the state level, and immediate and specific at the local level.* (Group 4)
- *The federal government should not set goals for education, but priorities for immediate change.* (Group 4)
- *Goals and objectives should be set for each child individually.* (Group 4)
- *Not sure there should be goals and objectives–but if we must have them, then goals should be sufficiently broad that a variety of conditions, such as socioeconomic level within a district, can be accommodated without forcing another operating level into conflict.* (Group 3)
- *If there are to be state objectives, they should be minimum standards which may be exceeded.* (Group 3)
- Consensus statement: *Goals should come from and exist at all levels. Objectives should be set at all levels. Teachers should have the most input in determining performance criteria and objectives.* (Group 2)
- *Goals should be set by the community that owns the school; all others (teachers, parents, etc.,) should be advisory.* Counter-statement: *I disagree. Suppose the community just wants basket weaving, and no math or reading–are we professionals to provide that?* Response: *Sure; or go to another school system more to your liking.* (Group 10)
- *It doesn't matter what goals and objectives are set, since the actual decisions will be the result of political considerations.* (Group 1)
- *We should be problem centered, not goal centered.* (Group 1)
- *Parents are more concerned about their local schools than about whether the state has goals.* (Group 1)

In the end, most of the groups were able to come to some consensus on outline questions 1 through 7—those dealing with the usefulness, the setters and the specificity of goals and objectives. A reasonable sample of their conclusions appears in this summary statement of Group 10:

"Goals are necessary at all levels of operation and should be broad in concept.

"Goals at different levels should be broad enough to accommodate all the varied goals developed at the next lower level. This requires that the goal preparation process begin at the lowest level and work upward.

"At the community and/or district level, goals should be developed with the advice of teachers, students, parents, and professional associations.

"Educational objectives should be specific and reflect the needs of the community served.

"Objectives, of necessity, cannot be identical for all students beyond the stage of early basic skills acquisition. Objectives establishing minimums should be developed for all students, with modified objectives developed allowing for the individuality of the student."

While a good number of groups were thus developing a fair consensus on a number of questions, several warning signs emerged again and again.

One was a feeling of constraint. Operating within the suggested structure, outline and forms, many groups believed they were not contending with the hard and basic questions. In addition, the groups were aware that the time available was insufficient to address such complex issues.

And finally, there was a strong reaction against the proposed questions starting with Number 8. These got into the matter of setting objectives for teachers and administrators. They asked about the wisdom of, and the methodology for, quantifying behavioral objectives for teachers. They indicated to some a confirmation of their fear that accountability took aim on the teacher. Hackles began to rise.

Attaining Objectives

Some of the small groups had by now completed the assigned work on goals and objectives. Most had not, but believed they could double up in their next discussion meeting and address the first two topics together. Here and there, in a few groups, were those who were openly dubious about whether it made sense to attack the problems in the structured way the outline of topic questions seemed to suggest.

That attitude was soon to grow. But first the participants were called back into general session to hear the two speakers assigned to lead off the next topic: "By What Means Shall the Objectives Be Accomplished?"

The first speaker was Grace Treible, an elementary school teacher from Newton, New Jersey.

Ms. Treible took undeviating aim on the assigned topic. She went further, and broke it into the components which the Steering Committee had suggested as the outline for the small group discussions.

The first two of these dealt with determination of teaching-learning strategies. And on this she was crystal clear: "Determining the teaching-learning strategies remains the prerogative of the teacher."

Why?

Among other reasons, because "It is the teacher who must deal on a daily basis with such dominant factors of human nature as man's need to feel success, man's need to have a reason for being, and man's fear of being alone or different. These factors allow for conformity and domination. They present to the teacher the ever present and imposing challenge of providing security to creative humans and groups while balancing the relationship of freedom and authority.

"Teachers must deal with the very important but more measurable concerns of academic skills and their excellence. Our culture demands the mastery of these skills if the individual is to be able to take full advantage of his potential. The mastery of many of these skills is not the natural activity which children strive to perfect. Consequently, psychological complexities arise."

While the teacher must set the strategies, Ms. Treible noted, "That is not to say that creative and appropriate ideas of students or parents or other groups should be ignored. Accepting appropriate suggestions is in itself a teaching-learning strategy."

There are a number of self-appointed, instant authorities on education, she said, coming up with bright ideas. Education is not the only profession suffering from this universal expertise, she said, but added, "It is somewhat untenable to hold a teacher accountable for the implementation of someone else's bright idea."

It is reasonable for local/state boards of education to want to expose their staffs to various teaching learning techniques, Ms. Treible said. Those so wanting must consider the generally acceptable routes: "Appealing to

teacher preparation institutions to add graduate and undergraduate courses, providing supportive resource people, implementing in-service workshops, responding to the creative ideas of teachers, including teachers in materials selection, and encouraging the involvement of teachers in such activities as this Forum. Teachers have the same basic needs as other humans."

There are many teaching-learning strategies, Ms. Treible said, because teaching is a complex process:

"Teaching is the art and science of instruction which brings about learning in the pupil; it is what the teacher does to inform and stimulate the learner. Teaching calls for originality, ingenuity and adaptability; it relies on the understanding of how children in general learn and how particular students learn. It demands a constant diagnosis of what changes the current activity is producing. Teaching is the ability to negotiate a balance between children as individuals and as members of constantly merging and emerging groups. These skills, presently immeasurable, are all a part of the teaching art."

She was to have been followed by Dr. Gordon Cawelti, executive director of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, headquartered in Washington, D.C.

But Dr. Cawelti could not make it to the Forum—the second principal speaker to be absent. His speech was presented by Dr. Charles Speiker, a colleague at the ASCD.

In his prepared remarks, Dr. Cawelti gave as the firm belief of the Association that "good curriculum construction (which he related closely to accountability) cannot take place without authentic involvement of teachers, professionals and the community at large."

His paper went on to address the question of meeting school objectives by analyzing stages in curriculum development, and selection of strategies for instructional change. Dr. Cawelti listed five stages, with attendant problems, in curriculum development:

1. *Needs assessment.* This elicits viewpoints and priorities from teachers, school leaders, and citizens. But, ". . . needs assessment invariably produces a top ranking for basic skills on the part of citizens, while professionals who work with children every day tend to be more concerned with the child's personal growth and societal manners. In addition, thus far the accountability movement has tended to place an inordinate amount of attention on basic skills without having sufficient evidence to justify that this emphasis results in more productive citizens."

2. *Formulation of objectives.* This often follows the lead of the needs assessment in over-emphasis on the basic skills. "I believe that more attention needs to be given to the fundamental purposes of schooling, with these purposes being more akin to broad goals than specific instructional objectives. A major reason for the disenchantment of many young people with their schooling is that no one has stopped to conceive of the broader purposes of schooling such as the true role of a school in a democratic society."

3. *Selection of an organized content.* The local school people rarely do this themselves—rather, they are involved in "the selection of instructional materials developed at some remote publishing house or in a regional lab."

4. *Selection of an organized learning experience.* This

requires debate and participation by teachers, other professionals, and the community. "Many parents do not appreciate the advantages of open education simply because they do not understand it. It is not the kind of schooling they had, and it symbolizes to many a deterioration of discipline and other qualities they hope the professionals can teach better than the home."

5. *Specifying the evaluation model.* Much good work has been done in this area recently, but "the accountability movement has fallen far short of adopting some of the newer evaluative techniques which have distinguished clearly the difference between formative and summative evaluations. Accountability experts have focused far more on summative evaluations, and, as a result, little improvement in the curriculum itself is derived from evaluative data."

Dr. Caweiti's paper also listed briefly seven viable change strategies: The research and development approach, community involvement, the systems approach, alternative schools, consortia of schools with similar interests, the traditional strong leader approach, and humanizing the school climate.

Thus fortified, the Forum participants went back to their small groups to discuss the means of accomplishing objectives. The Steering Committee's outline proposed delving for answers to the following questions:

1. What groups and individuals should be involved in determining the administrative/management strategies for accomplishing educational objectives? (Students, teachers, parents, other citizens, local boards of education, state boards of education, legislatures, federal agencies, professional associations, others?)

2. What groups and individuals should be involved in determining the teaching-learning strategies for accomplishing the educational objectives? (Same suggested groups.)

3. To what extent should each group and/or individual be involved in determining appropriate strategies?

4. How can the schools best be organized to accomplish the objectives? (Self-contained classrooms, team teaching, open classrooms, student contract, alternative schools, departmentalization, other?)

5. What are the most important types of teaching strategies for accomplishing the objectives? (Didactic teaching, behavior modification, guided independent study, activities outside the school?)

6. Should the strategies and methodologies be the same for all students?

7. Are some strategies better for accomplishing some objectives than others? Which ones?

Some of the groups gave it a game try—at least through the first three suggested questions. Typical statements from their discussions:

- *Society can determine the what—the goals; but teachers must determine how–the strategies.* (Group 4)
- *There's a large assumption packed into the form of the questions—asking who sets administrative/management strategies, and obviously looking for the answer, "administrator"; then asking who sets teaching-learning strategy, and obviously looking for the answer, "teachers." As a teacher, I am a management expert too.* (Group 10)
- *The textbooks are part of the strategy.* Counter statement: *That's part of the reason I don't see parents involved in strategy—witness what they're doing now in West Vir-*

ginia about textbooks. Counter-counter statement: *But they would do that anyway, whether we want to involve them in the strategy or not.* Counter-counter-counter statement: *The setting of school calendars is an administrative strategy that surely requires parent input.* (Group 10)

- *Professionals have to determine the how and what.* (Group 9)
- *We couldn't agree on definitions-how could we agree on the process?* (Group 5)
- Consensus statement by Group 10: *"Teachers, administrators, and local boards of education should have decision-making roles in determining administrative/management strategies. Professional teacher associations may be involved in the decision-making process if necessary for negotiation purposes; otherwise, these associations, plus students and parents, should function in an advisory capacity.*

"Teaching/learning strategies should be decided by students and teachers with advisory inputs from administrators and parents at the local level. Teacher preparation institutions must perform an advisory function and may take an active role in decision making.

"Strategies and methodologies should not be the same for individual students or teachers."

But when it came to the rest of the proposed questions—those asking which is the best way to achieve this or that—almost unanimously, the participants balked.

"All of the above," one said. "None of the above," said another. "Whichever works best," said a third.

Group 10 put it politely:

"All of the 'good, better, best and must' type questions were rejected by the group as being answerable only on an individual rather than a group basis, and then only in respect to the experience and orientation of the individual respondee."

Others put it more bluntly:

- *We have come to no consensus. We can't agree on anything. I think we all feel badly about our progress. If other groups are in the same condition we are, this Forum is in bad shape.* (Group 5)
- *We have a lot of dissent, but little else to show for the day. We're questioning the very purpose of this Forum. Perhaps the best answer is just to forget about accountability once and for all.* (Group 8)
- *This Forum is entirely too structured. It assumes that we are one step farther along than we find ourselves to be. The Forum is appropriate only if we have an authentic role here—do we? Even if we do, our dynamics don't fit this structure.* (Group 10)

Something had happened during this first day of the Forum. In the beginning, participants in the small groups tended to be defensive, sometimes even hostile—after all, they were sitting down and talking about something in which all had stakes, and often different stakes. But as the day wore on, they got to know one another better, to loosen up. Even when they couldn't agree, they found they could talk rather freely. But they weren't sure they were talking about the right things in the right order. Some felt that in discussing questions which were subsets of the large question of accountability, they might be assumed to have some liking for accountability. The concerns were vexing. Happily, the Forum structure provided a channel to review concerns.

Reactions to the First Day

The Forum structure called for an end to the first day's discussions at 5:45 p.m., followed by a meeting of facilitators and recorders with Dr. Olson, the Forum director; Barbara Jones and Robert Campello, Jr., who had conducted the training sessions for facilitators; and members of the Steering Committee. The purpose was to review the first day's work and see if any changes and improvements should be made for the second and final day.

The facilitators made it perfectly plain that improvement was needed. In an intense discussion, skillfully but subtly guided by the trainers, they recounted their experiences and their frustrations.

Many teachers within their groups, they reported, harbored the suspicion that they had been gathered to endorse the concept of accountability and somebody else's notion of what accountability is, at that. Others had complained that the structure within which they were asked to work didn't meet their needs or desires; that they weren't getting to the basic questions; that whatever they said might be distorted in the final Forum report to indicate there was much more agreement than existed.

Echoing views expressed in the small group meetings, some facilitators questioned whether this Forum could accomplish anything—whether it should not have been preceded by another, at which common definitions and a common vocabulary could have been created. They wondered what the real motives of the U.S. Office of Education and of Dr. Olson had been in organizing it as they had.

These darkling suspicions were allayed when two representatives of teacher associations and members of the Steering Committee, Dr. Bernard H. McKenna and Gerald F. Hagans, stepped forward and reminded them that the Steering Committee had approved the structure of the Forum and the supporting forms. It wasn't an OE plot; it was the joint work of OE, NEA and AFT. Admittedly the Forum format wasn't perfect, and obviously it wasn't working as anticipated—but that was human error, not devious plotting.

The facilitators were further mollified when they were assured they didn't have to follow a rigid structure. The structure had been proposed as a starting point, as the banks between which each group could proceed with some assurance that they were on the same stream as other groups. But if they preferred to float without reference to these banks, they could.

The facilitators were discussing whether and how they would use their newly discovered freedom when Girard B. Hottleman, one of the featured speakers of that morning, entered the room with an announcement.

A group of teachers had just gotten together, he said, and asked him to notify the Forum officials that there would be a teachers' caucus the next day.

His announcement caused a flurry. What was it about? Was the Forum to be torpedoed, at the very moment its leaders thought they had a notion of how to rescue it? Who—which group—had called for the teachers' caucus? Who could and would attend? Where would it be? When would it be?

When?

There was a problem. There just wasn't time for it, Dr. Olson pointed out, except during lunch. The Forum was to start at 8:30 a.m., with speeches and discussions until 12:30 p.m. Then a one-hour break for lunch. Then a full schedule of speeches and discussions until 5 p.m., when a General Session would review the meeting and look ahead to next steps. Then a lot of people had planes to catch, and couldn't stay around. So when could the teachers' caucus be held?

That surely seemed to be a problem, Hottleman agreed. But, willy-nilly, the teachers' caucus would be held. Perhaps Forum officials could find some way to accommodate this fact. If not, the caucus would be held anyway.

On that note, Hottleman withdrew. The official crew had one more problem to discuss—the unhappiness of some participants at inability to question the principal speakers. It was agreed that questioning time would be provided on the morrow; and that those speakers of this first day who were still available would be asked to open themselves to retrospective questions too. This, obviously, would take more time on a day in which there was already insufficient time.

A little time opened up when it was announced that Dr. Leon M. Lessinger, a scheduled speaker for the next day, could not appear.

Assessment and Evaluation

For some, it was a long night. There were rump meetings; there were phone calls. There was even an early and amicable breakfast meeting between spokesmen for the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association.

There was accommodation without confrontation: so that, as participants gathered for the morning General Session, word was passed that a resolution of some importance would be available for them to take with them to their following small groups; and that the teachers' caucus would start around noon—biting somewhat into the scheduled small group discussions, somewhat into the lunch hour.

It was in a charged and expectant atmosphere, then, that the scheduled General Session began. The topic was "Assessment and Evaluation."

And, at a meeting at which the unanticipated had already become commonplace, an unexpected thing indeed happened here. The two speakers on this most touchy topic were renowned experts in the field—both of whom asserted their firm and strongly based opposition to the more common types of assessment and evaluation. If one were an achievement test, and if one were to wander into that meeting, one would indeed feel friendless.

The first speaker was Dr. W. James Popham, Professor of Education at the University of California at Los Angeles. He went directly for the heart of the matter.

"Evaluation and assessment constitute the core components of any properly conceived program of educational accountability. To become accountable, educators must evaluate the merits of their instructional endeavors: that is, they must systematically assemble evidence which will permit others to judge the worth of their educational efforts. By and large, the evidence used in such evaluations will be assembled by using tests and other assessment devices."

So the critical ingredient in accountability is evaluation, and evaluation's chief vehicles are tests and measures. All right, then, how good are tests and measures?

Bad—for evaluation and accountability.

Fine—for the purposes for which they were developed. These historically were to make comparisons between individuals so that the best-suited would be selected: e.g., in the military, who would make officers, or in colleges with more applicants than places, who would be admitted. These tests, both aptitude and achievement, are norm-referenced tests, relating any individual's performance to that of an entire group for purposes of drawing distinctions.

What happens when such norm-referenced tests are used for purposes of evaluating school performance? Generally, said Dr. Popham, three things—all bad:

1. *Mismatch between test and curriculum.* What is emphasized in the schools of Billings, Montana, may not be emphasized in those of Detroit. Test publishers try first to smooth out the differences, then to gloss over them. But there are mismatches—and these "result in spurious data, hence spurious conclusions about the effectiveness of a local school system's program."

2. *Inadequate improvement cues.* A good test should point the way to improvement; ". . . it is a basic tenet of educational evaluation that programs found wanting will either be discarded or, more frequently, shaped up." But, "norm-referenced achievement tests provide scant guidance regarding how to improve inadequate student performance."

3. *Exclusion of key concepts.* Good test items are those answered correctly by about half the test-takers. An item answered correctly by a lot more than that—say, 80 to 90 per cent—is discarded, because it is of little use in establishing differences. If teachers think a certain concept important and teach it well, and if their pupils do well on it in standardized tests, then the items regarding that concept are likely to be dropped: "a bizarre situation," Dr. Popham said drily.

Some think salvation lies in criterion-referenced tests. They do have more power, Dr. Popham said—particularly more descriptive power. But there is more to having good criterion-referenced tests than merely wanting them, he said, warning his audience to be "prepared for some pretty heroic huckstering by test publishers in the next few years."

Second speaker on this eventful morning was Dr. L. Wendell Rivers, director of the Mental Health Specialists Program at the University of Missouri—St. Louis.

The controversy over testing has been raging for some seven years, he noted, and many of his colleagues think that not much has been learned during the years.

"However, I disagree," said Dr. Rivers. "I think that many factors have emerged which will help the classroom teacher and the school administrator to make accurate and critical decisions regarding the use of standardized tests:

1. The distinction between standardized tests of intelligence and standardized achievement tests is, at best, vague and cloudy in respect to the abilities tapped by both.

2. The differences found between the scores achieved by urban Black children and middle-class urban white children are test-related rather than genetically related.

3. The allocation of funds for schools or districts cannot be based upon the scores obtained by minority children on standardized tests of intelligence or achievement.

4. Traditional standardized tests of intelligence or achievement are not appropriate for use with a vast majority of urban and rural minority children.

5. The accurate and fair evaluation of teacher effectiveness and performance cannot be based upon scores achieved by their students or on traditional standardized tests of achievement.

6. Tests used with the population on which they were standardized are fairly good predictors of academic success.

7. Test developers and producers should be accountable for informing users as to the limitations of their assessment devices in regard to minority individuals.

8. Negative labels given to children as a result of their performance on a standardized test produce far-reaching and persistent negative implications in the lives of children so labeled."

In addition to these descriptions of tests, Dr. Rivers offered a list of questions test-givers—such as schools—should ask themselves before they expose minority individuals to any assessment device:

1. Why do I test?
2. What informational resources should I explore before administering tests?
3. What is the environmental makeup of my testing facilities?
4. Are my testing facilities congruent with the natural environment of the person to be tested?
5. What social/emotional conditions exist for students during the testing period?
6. Are my test results used properly?
7. How should I interpret test results; what framework should be used?

The questioning that had been promised the previous night was desultory; nothing said to the two speakers on evaluation indicated any disagreement of import.

Several of the previous speakers also took their place on the podium for questioning, with roughly the same result—except for a close quizzing of Thomas J. Burns, U.S. Acting Associate Commissioner of Education.

Mr. Burns had to deny firmly that there was a hidden agenda—that OE had hatched some plot in which they were all entrapped.

But there might be a new agenda, he suggested:

"Is this worthwhile? Can we talk about this issue five years after it surfaced? Would it have worked if we had talked before?"

Other issues would surface, he noted. For instance, within a year the federal government probably would be giving states from $100,000 to $1 million each to study their equalization formulas. (Public Law 93-380, Educational Amendments of 1974).

Those grants and those studies, he predicted, would have "tremendous impact." Should Forums be called beforehand to discuss this? What did they think?

It was something else to ponder as the conferees went off to their small group meetings. Their thinking affected the Forum deeply.

The small sessions were to discuss assessment and evaluation.

Their Forum notebooks proposed that they address themselves to five questions:

1. What should be the main purposes of assessment and evaluation? (Improvement of instruction, diagnosing individual learning difficulties, placement, determining how well each individual student is mastering objectives, comparing students, comparing classrooms, comparing school districts, comparing states, comparing educational programs, comparing educational personnel, other?)

2. Who should determine appropriate assessment devices and procedures? (Students, teachers, building administrators, central office staff, local boards of education, state boards of education, state departments of education, educational researchers, legislators, others?)

3. What are the most appropriate student assessment devices? (Standardized tests, criterion-referenced tests, individual diagnostic tests, teacher-made tests, confer-

ences with students, student performance, student products, student self-evaluation, student peer evaluation, teacher professional judgment, other?)

4. Who should apply student assessment devices? (Teachers, specialists, counselors, principals or other administrators, outside consultants, other?)

5. Who should be mainly responsible for interpreting and using the results of assessment and evaluation? (Teachers, school administrators, parents and other citizens, school boards, state departments of education, other?)

Some groups dutifully attacked the proposed outline. Samples:

- *State assessment programs should not be mandated until the validity and reliability of measurement instruments have been determined.* (Group 8)
- *Assessment is a professional responsibility, not a public responsibility.* (Group 12)
- *Things we disagree on: There should be no statewide plans for evaluation.* (Group 6)
- *We need a needs assessment system that results from the interplay between parents, teachers and students.* (Group 1)
- *Things we agree on: The improvement of instruction is the major purpose of assessment and evaluation. Students, teachers, building administrators, central office staff should all help determine appropriate assessment devices and procedures, dependent on expertise. The state and researchers should serve as resource personnel.* (Group 9)
- *Recommendations for Narrowing Disagreements: Teacher professional judgment is the most appropriate student assessment advice; principals, administrators and outside consultants should come into the process in very rare special cases; teachers and administrators should play cooperative but different roles in interpreting assessment.* (Group 9)

But not all groups attacked the outline as prescribed. In the first instance, they had been assured the night before that they were free to proceed in their own fashions. In the second instance, they had before them the resolution that had appeared at the doors of the General Session meeting room as they filed out.

In the form in which they were given it, the resolution read as follows:

"Accountability is perceived as a shared responsibility by all of the parties involved in the educational milieu.

"Given the constraints imposed by economic, social, political, psychological and cultural forces, the educational practitioners cannot assume a role of accepting evaluation based on student achievement.

"Legislators (federal and state), executives (federal and state), school boards, state commissioners, educators, parents and children all have responsibilities for different aspects of the educational system. It is not possible that an effective system can operate if any of the partners do not meet their responsibilities."

Fairly mild stuff, appeared to be the participants' general reaction—not the keg of dynamite they had been led to expect. Several groups debated the resolution and accepted it. Several others drafted proposed amendments. Some took it as a substitute text for the suggested discussion outline. Others took it as a fair statement on accountability in general. But, before most groups could take a firm position, the teachers' caucus had started.

The Teachers' Caucus

The teachers' caucus, like the previously offered conference resolution, appeared to most a mild affair.

A resolution was presented, labeled a Joint Resolution. Joint as between whom was not stated; although, from the prior discussions and the resolution wording, it appeared joint between National Education Association participants and American Federation of Teachers participants. It was debated briefly, mostly to clarify language, and was voted on in the following form:

"The United States Office of Education has been actively conducting programs, publishing materials and funding projects on accountability for the past several years without the functional and significant involvement of the organized teachers.

"The National Forum on Accountability conducted in Denver on May 8-9, 1975, was the first USOE program to obtain feedback from teachers' organizations in any substantial way. The short period of time provided little opportunity to achieve large group consensus on the concept, definition and legitimacy of accountability.

"Therefore, the teacher participants of this conference urge that the USOE demonstrate its commitment to obtain input from teacher organizations by holding additional national forums on accountability and other educational issues; allocating appropriate resources, providing adequate time frames and cooperatively developing programs with the NEA and AFT, who shall in all cases select their own representatives."

There was an attempt to amend the second paragraph of the resolution to congratulate USOE for belatedly including teachers—but it died a-borning as someone rose to say he didn't want to be associated with any good word for USOE.

As phrased, the Joint Resolution was put to the vote in a room with some 60 persons present, and passed with no discernible dissent.

Noteworthy in the resolution were two features:
1. In criticizing the time frame for the Forum, it was criticizing NEA and AFT as well as USOE, for all three were represented on the Steering Committee that organized the Forum. 2. It called for future Forums on this and other issues. This was the first clear "Yes" to Tom Burns' question, "Is this worthwhile?"

(This interest in similar Forums was demonstrated in the post-Forum survey, reported fully in the closing chapter. One statement in the survey was, "I would like to be involved in designing future conferences of this kind." To this, 84 percent of the teacher participants and 76 percent of the nonteacher participants assented. On the statement, "I would like to participate in another National Forum on Accountability," affirmative answers were given by 100 percent of teachers and 76 percent of others.)

Who's Accountable?

The day was wearing on, and the participants were wearing down. They came back into the afternoon General Session not quite sure what was going on—for instance, what had the teachers' caucus done? And what was to happen about the conference resolution they had seen that morning? And perhaps above all, how and when would the Forum end?

It took some 45 minutes of scurrying around before the teachers' caucus resolution was read to the full Forum—for by this time the early enplaners had begun to drift out, and key people were missing. Participants heard the resolution without noticeable astonishment, and settled back to hear the last two scheduled speakers.

The assigned topic was, "Who Should Be Accountable to Whom and for What?" Addressing it was Gerald F. Hagans, a high school teacher in Berrien Springs, Michigan, and a member of the Forum Steering Committee.

He addressed the participants as "friends of children," and spoke as one.

Who is accountable? He treated the question with some bemusement: "Who is not accountable to our children's education? I think that if you would pursue the answer to this question, you would agree with me that we all share the responsibility to the education of our children."

Acknowledging the good intentions of the founders of accountability—primarily the intention to improve the quality of education—Hagans said the whole movement has suffered because of ill-conceived or poorly implemented programs.

"It seems as though the brunt of any accountability model falls the heaviest on the classroom teacher and his administrator."

He conceded—and even gloried in—the fact that the teacher has a good deal to do with the child's education, with his success or failure. That's what the teacher is about.

But, "A source of frustration for teachers, who have sincerely tried to improve the means by which we educate our students, is the fact that we can only do so much. Teachers cannot do it alone. Teachers should not be held solely accountable. In fact, no particular group should be held solely accountable for the success or failure of a student or an accountability system. Some leaders have stated that accountability begins at the top, which is an erroneous statement. It is nice to think so, but in practice it simply is not so. In fact, I believe that at what level accountability begins is irrelevant, because regardless where it begins, it simply does not work unless we all work together."

Hagans then ticked off some others, besides teachers, who must be held accountable, with some of the things they are accountable for: legislators, administrators, and,

perhaps most importantly, parents and community. They are all needed.

"All of us are like pieces of a puzzle of accountability. If one or more of the pieces become lost or broken, then there is no solution to the puzzle.

"As a footnote to this speech, I would like to raise a concern of mine. I am concerned about the outcome of this Forum, because someway, somehow, education in my classroom in Berrien Springs, Michigan, as well as the classes of some two million other teachers can be affected. It is my hope that this Forum will mark the beginning of a revitalized effort of people working earnestly together, without ulterior motives, to do what is best for our children."

Hagans was followed by Al Mayrhofer of the School of Education of the University of South Carolina, speaking in place of his absent colleague, Dr. Leon M. Lessinger.

He noted that Dr. Lessinger's paper had been distributed to the participants, and commended it to their attention. On the particular point at issue—who is responsible to whom?– the paper had this to say:

"The appropriate unit of accountability for results is the school and the school district. Accountability is a system concept—a set of mutual and interdependent relationships and functions to achieve a defined purpose. A teacher cannot be held solely responsible for results. He or she can be held responsible only for knowing and using 'good practice.'

"By definition, good practice should yield positive results. Over time—at least three to five years—differentials in success by teachers of comparable clientele can be studied and system changes (i.e., changes in resource allocation, training, methodology, etc.) can be made to improve the effectiveness of those not functioning at optimal levels.

"A further word about accountability as a system concept is necessary here. The system nature of accountability implies a remarkable change in attitude toward the process of instruction. This is an attitude of system responsibility for results. If the school as a system does not attain the objectives it sets or that are set for it—if the students do not learn—the system is redesigned until they do.

"This redesign may involve upgrading of training; new resources; improved methods; improved materials. Regardless of the results, the students or parents or teachers are not blamed for failure to learn. It is the system's job to get the required or desired results. If it does not, it is worked on—using the best of management techniques and strategy—until it does.

"The system's responsibility for results is to its clients, the students and their parents, and to its patrons, the taxpayers and citizenry. It bears a particular responsibility to its employees also. As a well-managed organization, it must employ the best leadership practices known. Fortunately, these include an emphasis on concern for human growth and fulfillment, as well as getting optimal results."

And so, back to the small group meetings—to ponder on who is responsible to whom for what, and to firm up positions on the conference resolution that would soon be before the Forum.

The program suggested that the small groups consider

the scheduled topic under these questions:

1. In what ways should the "who's" be accountable?
2. What categories of groups and individuals should work together to establish a working relationship between fiscal and program accountability?
3. Should the school staff provide leadership in improving conditions in the community as they relate to learning in school?
4. In what ways can the school work with other agencies in the community to assist students in becoming accountable for their progress in school?
5. What types of motivation should be built into the accountability process for staff? For students? For parents? For administrators?
6. What types of penalties, if any, should be built into the accountability process for staff? For students? For parents? For administrators?
7. What information is needed by various groups and individuals in order to carry out their roles in educational accountability?
8. What groups or individuals are responsible for coordinating all the elements of accountability—"putting it all together"?

Finally, the Steering Committee packet suggested the small groups complete a matrix of responsibility—listing the "What's" (goal setting, strategy determination, classroom conditions, etc.) down the left side and the possible "Who's" (Students, teachers, parents, etc.) as column headings, and neatly matching one set with the other.

Only one group—Group 9—attempted to complete the matrix. Most of the groups also declined to try to answer the proposed questions for this final discussion session.

Rather, those who responded at all said, for the most part and very simply, that everybody is accountable—and that nobody should be punished. Samples:

- *A precedent condition to teacher accountability is parental accountability for the child's mental, physical and emotional readiness to learn.* (Group 3)
- *The purpose of accountability is not to place blame but to improve education.* (Group 3)
- *There must be mutual accountability in conditions and resources.* (Group 3)
- *Everyone is and should be accountable—the objectives should be reasonable, and the conditions of accountability under the control of the one held accountable.* (Group 2)
- *Everyone can be accountable; but the focus must be on the progress of the pupil.* (Group 2)
- *Any accountability system highly evaluative of the teacher hurts teacher morale.* (Group 1)
- *Some parents meet their responsibilities; some don't.* (Group 1)
- *Students are accountable for attendance and receptivity.* (Group 8)
- *Prevent scapegoating, rewarding and punishing.* (Group 10)
- *Our goal is shared responsibility. We agree that education has not been adequately funded. In summary, we disagree on the very concept of accountability; on the question whether we can measure meaningfully; on who is accountable for what; on the whole hierarchy of goals and objectives; on whether we should evaluate programs rather than people.* (Group 6)
- *The following list of impacts on education should be considered in describing accountability plans: The incentives and resources in the plan for innovative behavior;*

the changes in the distribution of decision-making power; the changes generated in the type and quantity of information available to teachers, administrators and the public; and the probable public relations aspects of the accountability plan under consideration. (Group 10)

And so back to the closing General Session, for the last planned business of the Forum—review and preview, and the last unplanned happening—treatment of resolutions that had emerged free-form.

First, the conference resolution. In the form in which it was finally presented to the Forum, it read as follows:

"Accountability is perceived by participants in the National Forum on Educational Accountability as a shared responsibility by all of the parties involved in the educational milieu: legislators (federal and state), executives (federal and state), school boards, state commissioners, educators, parents and children all have responsibilities for different aspects of education. It is not possible that an effective system can operate if any of the parties do not meet their responsibilities.

"Educators can be held accountable for that portion of the teaching-learning process over which they have control. Educators' competence cannot be evaluated on the basis of student achievement because of the multiple variables which affect learning, caused by economic, social, political, psychological and cultural factors, and the limitations of existing standardized achievement tests."

It took a little while to get the resolution in that shape before the Forum. Nobody was quite sure whether they were operating under Roberts' Rules of Order and voting, or whether they were expressing a Forum consensus. In the end, it turned out that the vast majority didn't care all that much which—they just wanted to proceed, say their say and go; so they operated under whatever convention seemed most suited to the moment.

There was a flurry over the adverb "primarily." Someone offered it as an amendment, so that the affected sentence would read, "Educators' competence cannot be evaluated primarily on the basis of student achievement, etc." Seeming acceptable, "primarily" was adopted by a vote of 55-34.

Someone then had second thoughts, and asked Dr. Bernard H. McKenna, who had played a significant role in the conference, what he thought about that. The McKenna response was short and to the point: "With that word 'primarily' in there, teachers will be had."

After some parliamentary maneuvering of doubtful Robertsism but undeniable effectiveness, the offending word "primarily" was expunged.

Then there was a counter-resolution to the effect that some number of participants didn't agree and believed that "the performance of educators should be evaluated, in part, by valid evidences of student progress." Again some parliamentary accommodation; and finally a vote that permitted 17 persons to agree with the counter-resolution.

And so the main resolution passed by an overwhelming voice vote.

Now it was mop-up time.

A number of chosen participants took the floor to say, among other things, the following:

Despite a shaky start, it turned out to be a good meeting . . . Where we are to go depends on who we were when we came in . . . Education is a fantastic

operation—if the Office of Education wants to know what's going on it should check more with teachers . . . We've learned that, rather than unravel disaster, it makes sense to solve our problems ahead of time . . . There is no lessening of the thrust toward accountability . . . We hope someone will reconvene some such Forum to continue this dialogue . . . We were just getting to know one another and work well together . . . If there is to be another national meeting, there should be pre-meetings at home in the states . . . We need some systematic process to review what we do and to establish priorities . . . We are in a process of renewal and improvement.

And representatives of a number of the small groups came forward to report their resolutions, their consensus, their urging that such Forums be held in the future on accountability and other matters important to education, because, somehow or other, they worked.

And, finally, there was the resolution of thanks—considered obligatory at most such gatherings, but something of a surprise at this one. And it, too, paid tribute to the value of such Forums:

"Be it resolved that the participants of the Forum extend their thanks and appreciation to all those responsible for planning and facilitating the National Forum on Educational Accountability held in Denver, Colorado, on May 8-9, 1975.

"Be it further resolved that the basic idea of the Forum (i.e., that educators and lay citizens alike, holding different points of view, can solve major educational issues when given the opportunity for dialogue, discussion and decision making) can be a model for future conferences."

It passed unanimously.

Epilogue

Preceding chapters have outlined what was said and what was done at the National Forum on Educational Accountability. The report is subject to human error in observation and reportage; it was subject to the possibility that part of the record was made in the heat of the moment rather than in mature reflection.

How closely did the flow at the Forum reflect the mature judgments of those participating?

To find out, the Forum arranged for a post-survey, conducted by James Gold, Archie Buchmiller and their colleagues at the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

The preliminary survey draft was reviewed by members of the Steering Committee and others. The final draft was sent to 159 Forum participants, with a follow-up letter sent after two weeks to those not yet replying.

In the end, 83 replies were received—31 from teachers, 46 from others (termed non-teachers in survey reporting) and six from persons not identifiable in either group. These six were eliminated from the analysis conducted in Wisconsin, which concentrated on identification of points of agreement and disagreement between teachers and non-teachers. The complete Wisconsin analysis is presented after a set of observations by the Forum reporters.

Differences: Teachers and Others

The Wisconsin analysis points out many areas of agreement between teachers and non-teachers. The Forum reporters remain impressed, however, with a reading of the survey that confirms a central Forum observation—that even when teachers and non-teachers agree, they are inclined to do so with very different emphases and priorities.

To test and demonstrate this difference despite some similarity, the following methodology was applied to survey results.

Positive responses (Strongly Agree and Agree) were totalled. From these were subtracted negative responses (Disagree and Strongly Disagree). The result was a Raw Positive Score, ignoring the two neutral positions (Undecided or No Answer). An arbitrary cutting point of 25 was selected: Any statement on which the Raw Positive Score of teachers was 25 or more different from the Raw Positive Score of non-teachers (even though the two groups might agree in general thrust) was isolated.

This methodology revealed the two groups were 25 or more percentage points apart on 24 of 58 statements—somewhat more than 40 percent. This included 10 of 14 statements in the "Accountability: General Considerations" section of the survey—a bit more than 70 percent.

Section 1: Forum Evaluation

Statement 7: Participants with different points of view about the issues of accountability were adequately represented. Both groups agreed, the teachers more force-

fully. Raw Positive Scores: teachers 64, non-teachers 30.

Statement 14: The Forum was successful in meeting its goals. Both groups are agreed; the teacher Raw Positive Score was 42, the non-teacher 13.

Statement 15: If given the opportunity, I would like to participate in another National Forum on Accountability. Again, both groups would—the teachers with a Raw Positive Score of 100, non-teachers with 68.

Section II: Accountability—General Considerations

Statement 1: Accountability is necessary for restoring public confidence in and support for the schools. Teachers minus 19, non-teachers 66.

Statement 2: Accountability is a means of informing the public of the purposes of education. Teachers minus 13, non-teachers 67.

Statement 3: Accountability is a means of informing the public of the outcomes of education. Teachers, minus 22; non-teachers, 67.

Statement 4: Accountability has generally had an adverse effect on teachers. Teachers, 78; non-teachers, 8.

Statement 5: Accountability has generally had an adverse effect on administrators. Teachers, 39; non-teachers, minus 39.

Statement 6: Accountability has generally had an adverse effect on students. Teachers, 32; non-teachers, minus 37.

Statement 7: Accountability for student performance is inevitable. Teachers, minus 16; non-teachers, 53.

Statement 8: Any accountability process must include a measurement strategy. Teachers, 39; non-teachers, 81.

Statement 11: An accountability process must ultimately include evaluation of student learning. Teachers, 9; non-teachers, 74.

Statement 14: Professional personnel must have control over the factors which influence the results for which they are accountable. Teachers, 94; non-teachers, 69.

Section IV: Goals and Objectives

Statement 7: State educational goals should be derived by synthesizing local district goals. Teachers, 25; non-teachers, minus 13.

Statement 13: Goals and objectives are too restrictive and tend to dehumanize the educational process. Teachers, minus 16; non-teachers, minus 65.

Statement 14: It is possible to create a set of goals and objectives which would not be dehumanizing. Teachers, 62; non-teachers, 93.

Statement 15: Because most states have a constitutional responsibility for education, each should have a set of goals and performance objectives for all students in the state. Teachers, minus 30; non-teachers, 9.

Statement 16: The public has a right to expect that all students leaving school will be capable of demonstrating certain minimal competencies. Teachers, 18; non-teachers, 65.

Statement 17: There should be several levels of learner objectives ranging from program to instructional objectives. Teachers, 55; non-teachers, 83.

Statement 18: Educational objectives with performance criteria should be developed for all classroom activities. Teachers, minus 52; non-teachers, minus 11.

Section V: Educational Assessment

Statement 2: The public desires pupil assessment type information. Teachers, 35; non-teachers, 64.

Statement 4: Despite recognized limitations of tests (any type) the results should be used by educational decision makers since no other student achievement in-

formation is currently available. Teachers, minus 45; non-teachers, minus 3.

Statement 5: Student assessment results should not be used in evaluating professional personnel. Teachers, 91; non-teachers, 12.

Statement 6: Student assessment results should not be used as one of several components in a total professional personnel evaluation system. Teachers, 35; non-teachers, minus 18.

Match-up: Observations and Responses

The survey provided an interesting check on a number of central observations made by the recorders and the reporters during the course of the Forum. Several of these are discussed briefly.

Observation I: Forum Format

Criticism of the Forum format loomed large at the end of the first day. Complaints ranged from an unspoken assumption that educational accountability was acceptable to all, to a sense of restriction from discussion of the basic issues.

Yet the survey response to the Forum was overwhelmingly positive (Section I, Forum Evaluation). The Forum was judged to be fair, informative and well conducted; understanding was developed and the possibility of future advance accepted; most participants would like to do it again. On the negative side, relatively few said their opinions had been changed as a result of the Forum.

Observation II: Acceptance of Accountability

Protests were heard from the beginning that accountability seemed to be accepted as good and inevitable—while some participants doubted the premise strongly.

The survey bore out this observation. Teachers and non-teachers had a wide divergence of opinion on most of the pertinent questions (Section II, Accountability—General Considerations). Apparently there can be no safe conclusion that teachers accept accountability.

Observation III: Goals and Objectives

Reporters and recorders drew the observation that there was general agreement: Goals are broad and ought to be established by all those concerned; objectives should be narrower and are in large part a professional responsibility.

The survey tended to bear out this observation. (Section IV, Goals and Objectives). There were interesting dichotomies. Thus, while broadness of goals was acknowledged in Statement 1, Statement 4 won concurrence with the criticism that goals are too general to have significant meaning. There also appeared in the survey a lack of agreement about the participation of the state in goal formation. In fact, there was doubt about the wisdom of having state goals.

The Survey

There follows a report of survey results and brief summary analyses made by James Gold, Archie Buchmiller and their colleagues at the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

Survey questions are reproduced with the percentage of teachers (T) and non-teachers (NT) responding on a 5-point scale. The scale, as abbreviated, is to be read:

SA = Strongly Agree	D = Disagree
A = Agree	SD = Strongly Disagree
U = Undecided	NA = No Answer

(Note: Some lines do not add up to precisely 100 percent because of rounding.)

FORUM EVALUATION

		SA	A	U	D	SD	NA
1. Participating in the National Forum on Educational Accountability was a productive experience.	T	52%	42%	3%	3%	0	0
	NT	30%	54%	4%	4%	2%	4%
2. The Forum format was a good process for discussing accountability and trying to narrow the differences of a diversity of people.	T	10%	61%	6%	23%	0	0
	NT	13%	52%	15%	7%	9%	4%
3. I received adequate information about the purpose and scope of the Forum prior to arriving in Denver.	T	10%	52%	6%	23%	10%	0
	NT	7%	43%	9%	30%	4%	7%
4. The conference covered the essential issues of accountability.	T	23%	42%	16%	19%	0	0
	NT	7%	50%	11%	26%	2%	4%
5. The Forum format facilitated the sharing of ideas between participants on the issues of accountability.	T	19%	55%	13%	13%	0	0
	NT	17%	50%	7%	15%	4%	7%
6. Including speakers with contrasting views contributed to the small group discussions.	T	29%	58%	6%	6%	0	0
	NT	30%	43%	9%	9%	2%	7%
7. Participants with different points of view about the issues of accountability were adequately represented.	T	29%	48%	10%	10%	3%	0
	NT	22%	30%	22%	20%	2%	4%
8. I had sufficient opportunities to express my individual concerns about the issues of accountability during the discussion sessions.	T	45%	48%	3%	3%	0	0
	NT	24%	61%	2%	4%	4%	4%
9. The facilities provided for the group sessions were adequate.	T	35%	58%	0	6%	0	0
	NT	33%	52%	0	9%	4%	4%
10. Participation in this Forum helped resolve some of the questions I had about accountability.	T	19%	32%	16%	23%	6%	3%
	NT	11%	33%	15%	33%	2%	7%

11. Participation in the Forum motivated me to change my opinion on several accountability issues.	T	3%	16%	19%	45%	16%	0
	NT	7%	20%	17%	39%	13%	4%
12. I left the Forum with some worthwhile information that I could share with my colleagues.	T	32%	58%	3%	6%	0	0
	NT	24%	57%	7%	2%	7%	4%
13. I would like to be involved in designing future conferences of this kind.	T	61%	23%	13%	3%	0	0
	NT	43%	33%	11%	4%	4%	4%
14. The Forum was successful in meeting its goals.	T	10%	45%	32%	13%	0	0
	NT	2%	37%	30%	15%	11%	4%
15. If given the opportunity, I would like to participate in another National Forum on Accountability.	T	77%	23%	0	0	0	0
	NT	48%	28%	11%	4%	4%	4%
16. As a result of the Forum I have a better understanding of which aspects of accountability people agree and disagree on.	T	42%	45%	6%	3%	0	3%
	NT	22%	59%	4%	9%	2%	4%
17. As a result of the Forum, I feel better prepared to work with others in attempting to narrow the differences which exist concerning accountability.	T	29%	48%	6%	13%	0	3%
	NT	20%	48%	11%	17%	0	4%

SUMMARY: Forum Evaluation

Both teachers and non-teachers responded positively to the overall evaluation of the Forum. Over 80% of the participants felt the Forum was a productive experience and that they would like to help plan and participate in any future efforts. In terms of results, it was apparent that although a majority of participants felt they had gained valuable knowledge at the Forum and would like to participate in another one, less than half were motivated to change their opinion concerning accountability issues. Finally, nearly a third of the participants were undecided as to whether the goals of the Forum had been met. This response may be due to the fact that nearly a third, also, felt they had not received adequate information about the purpose and scope of the Forum prior to arriving in Denver.

ACCOUNTABILITY: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

		SA	A	U	D	SD	NA
1. Accountability is necessary for restoring public confidence in and support for the schools.	T	6%	19%	23%	23%	19%	10%
	NT	37%	39%	11%	4%	7%	2%
2. Accountability is a means of informing the public of the purpose of education.	T	16%	16%	13%	26%	19%	10%
	NT	35%	43%	4%	4%	7%	4%
3. Accountability is a means of informing the public of the outcomes of education.	T	10%	19%	10%	32%	19%	10%
	NT	30%	50%	2%	4%	9%	4%
4. Accountability has generally had an adverse effect on teachers.	T	42%	39%	10%	3%	0	6%
	NT	20%	22%	22%	30%	4%	2%
5. Accountability has generally had an adverse effect on administrators.	T	16%	42%	16%	16%	3%	6%
	NT	4%	13%	20%	41%	15%	7%
6. Accountability has generally had an adverse effect on students.	T	19%	29%	19%	10%	6%	6%
	NT	2%	15%	28%	39%	15%	2%
7. Accountability for student performance is inevitable.	T	16%	13%	16%	16%	29%	10%
	NT	24%	43%	13%	7%	7	4%
8. Any accountability process must include a measurement strategy.	T	19%	32%	26%	6%	6%	10%
	NT	37%	48%	4%	4%	0	7%
9. Any accountability process must clearly describe who is accountable for what.	T	58%	32%	3%	0	0	6%
	NT	59%	33%	0	4%	0	4%
10. Any accountability process must be cooperatively developed by all those affected.	T	87%	10%	0	0	0	3%
	NT	66%	24%	2%	4%	0	4%
11. An accountability process must ultimately include evaluation of student learning.	T	19%	26%	13%	23%	13%	6%
	NT	43%	37%	9%	4%	2%	4%

12. An accountability process must recognize that many individuals and groups are responsible for the education of students and that each must do his part.	T	77%	19%	0	0	0	3%
	NT	70%	24%	0	2%	0%	4%
13. Accountability is intended to improve future processes and will not be effective if used in a punitive manner.	T	55%	19%	10%	6%	6%	3%
	NT	57%	26%	7%	4%	0	7%
14. Professional personnel must have control over the factors which influence the results for which they are accountable.	T	81%	13%	0	0	0	6%
	NT	43%	30%	17%	4%	0	4%

SUMMARY: Accountability—General Considerations

Participant responses on this section of the survey revealed some of the key similarities and differences which teachers and non-teachers discussed at the Forum. First, non-teachers felt more strongly than teachers that accountability is a means of providing the public with information about the purpose and outcomes of schooling which is needed for restoring public confidence in our schools. Second, non-teachers believed accountability inevitably involved student learning and performance, while teachers were less likely to agree or were undecided. Third, teachers believed that accountability has in general had an adverse effect on teachers, administrators and students. While 42 percent of the non-teachers believed that teachers were adversely affected, relatively few felt the same about administrators and students. The two groups did agree (1) that accountability should be cooperatively developed by those affected, and (2) that any accountability program must recognize that many people have responsibilities in the education of students so that it is essential everyone do his part, (3) that an accountability process must clearly describe who is accountable for what, and (4) that accountability will not be effective if used in a punitive manner.

BY WHAT MEANS SHOULD EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES BE ACCOMPLISHED?

	Teachers		Non-Teachers	
1. Which five groups/individuals should be most involved in the administration/management strategies for accomplishing educational objectives?	Teachers	58%	Teachers	43%
	Students	10	Students	17
	Local Boards	10	Local Boards	15
	Administrators	10	Administrators	9
	No Answer	10	No Answer	3
	Parents	3	State Boards	2
			Parents	2
			Federal Agencies	2
			Professional Org'n	2
2. Which five groups/individuals should be most involved in determining the cost/benefit relationships of alternative teaching-learning strategies?	Teachers	35%	Teachers	43%
	Local Boards	23	Local Boards	26
	Administrators	13	Administrators	15
	No Answer	13	No Answer	4
	Parents	3	State Boards	4
	Other Citizens	3	Students	2
	State Boards	3	Federal Agencies	2
	Federal Agencies	3	SEA	2
	Professional Org'n	3		
3. Which five groups/individuals should be most involved in determining the teaching-learning strategies for accomplishing educational objectives?	Teachers	74%	Teachers	68%
	Students	13	Students	22
	No Answer	10	Administrators	4
	Professional Org'n	3	No Answer	4
			State Boards	2
4. Which five groups/individuals should be most involved in implementing teaching-learning strategies?	Teachers	71%	Teachers	70%
	Students	19	Students	22
	No Answer	10	No Answer	4
			Administrators	2
			Parents	2

SUMMARY: By What Means Should Educational Objectives Be Accomplished?

The results of questions regarding the means of accomplishing objectives indicated a great deal of agreement between teachers and non-teachers. On each of the four questions teachers were identified as the group who should be most involved. Students were ranked second on each question except for the one dealing with cost/benefit analysis where both groups rated local boards second.

The results of this section should be considered somewhat tenuous since the administrators category was inadvertently omitted from the choices. Where they do appear in the results they were added by the respondent in the "other" category.

SUMMARY: Goals and Objectives

Nearly 90 percent of all respondents agreed with the definition of goals presented in the survey while approximately 70 percent of them thought that goals should be established at both the state and local levels.

From a development standpoint there was general agreement that goals and objectives are somewhat difficult to develop and that some sort of consensual process which incorporates the opinions of all groups involved should be used. Most respondents felt that goals should be based on broad concepts (human relations, basic skills, etc.) which cut across the traditional course offerings.

Only about a third of the teachers but only 11 percent of non-teachers believed that goals and objectives were restrictive and tended to dehumanize the educational process. Furthermore, 68 percent of the teacher and over 90 percent of the non-teachers felt that it is possible to create a set of goals and objectives which would not be dehumanizing. Over 60 percent agreed that some school outcomes should be described in terms of student experience rather than student output.

As a group the respondents tended to agree that educational objectives and performance criteria should not be developed for all classroom activity. But over 75 percent of the non-teachers and 50 percent of the teachers affirmed that the public has a right to expect that all students leaving school will be capable of demonstrating certain minimal competencies.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

		SA	A	U	D	SD	NA
1. Educational goals are broad area domains human knowledge, skills, competence, values and attitudes which are judged to be appropriate outcomes of a student's schooling.	T	35%	52%	6%	0	0	6%
	NT	52%	37%	2%	0	2%	7%
2. Educational learner outcome goals should be established at both the state and local levels.	T	26%	55%	6%	10%	0	3%
	NT	30%	41%	15%	9%	2%	2%
3. Educational goals are important for identifying the purpose of schooling.	T	39%	35%	13%	10%	0	3%
	NT	43%	43%	4%	2%	2%	4%
4. Most goal statements are too general to have significant meaning for anyone.	T	13%	39%	6%	26%	10%	6%
	NT	17%	26%	11%	33%	9%	4%
5. Educational goals at the state or local level are relatively easy to derive.	T	0	32%	6%	23%	23%	16%
	NT	4%	20%	7%	37%	15%	17%
6. There is little difference in the educational learner goals either between or within states.	T	3%	32%	23%	26%	6%	10%
	NT	9%	41%	17%	30%	0	2%
7. State educational goals should be derived by synthesizing local district goals.	T	3%	48%	13%	23%	3%	10%
	NT	13%	20%	17%	37%	9%	4%
8. It is desirable to develop state goals through some consensual process which incorporates the opinions of all groups involved in the educational process.	T	35%	52%	3%	3%	3%	3%
	NT	35%	39%	9%	11%	4%	2%
9. Goals should be based on curricular areas such as reading, mathematics, science.	T	3%	23%	39%	29%	3%	3%
	NT	11%	37%	13%	24%	13%	2%
10. Goals should be based on broad concepts (such as human relations, self-concept, economic understanding, basic skills) which cut across traditional curricular offerings.	T	26%	61%	3%	6%	0	3%
	NT	26%	66%	2%	2%	0	4%

11. The importance of goals lies in the way they are translated into objectives.	T	26%	55%	3%	10%	0	6%
	NT	33%	54%	2%	9%	0	2%
12. Educational objectives at the state or local level are difficult to derive.	T	16%	48%	10%	19%	3%	3%
	NT	22%	43%	9%	20%	4%	2%
13. Goals and objectives are too restrictive and tend to dehumanize the educational process.	T	13%	23%	10%	48%	3%	3%
	NT	7%	[illegible]	4%	43%	33%	7%
14. It is possible to create a set of goals and objectives which would not be dehumanizing.	T	10%	58%	19%	6%	0	6%
	NT	52%	41%	2%	0	0	4%
15. Because most states have a constitutional responsibility for education each should have a set of goals and performance objectives for all students in the state.	T	19%	6%	10%	23%	32%	10%
	NT	13%	33%	13%	26%	11%	4%
16. The public has a right to expect that all students leaving school will be capable of demonstrating certain minimal competencies.	T	16%	35%	10%	23%	10%	6%
	NT	35%	41%	9%	4%	7%	4%
17. There should be several levels of learner objectives ranging from program to instructional objectives.	T	10%	58%	13%	13%	0	6%
	NT	26%	57%	11%	0	0	7%
18. Educational objectives with performance criteria should be developed for all classroom activities.	T	0	19%	6%	32%	39%	3%
	NT	9%	24%	17%	33%	11%	7%
19. Some outcomes of schooling may be better described in terms of student experiences rather than student output objectives.	T	23%	71%	3%	0	0	3%
	NT	22%	61%	2%	7%	2%	7%

EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

		SA	A	U	D	SD	NA
1. Educational pupil assessment is a necessary part of accountability.	T	13%	45%	19%	10%	6%	6%
	NT	30%	37%	15%	4%	4%	9%
2. The public desires pupil assessment type information.	T	6%	45%	26%	16%	0	6%
	NT	37%	35%	13%	4%	4%	7%
3. The state of the art in measurement practice is such that no decisions should be made solely based on achievement test scores.	T	81%	13%	0	0	0	6%
	NT	52%	28%	4%	7%	0	9%
4. Despite recognized limitations of tests (any type), the results should be used by educational decision makers since no other student achievement information is currently available.	T	6%	10%	13%	32%	29%	10%
	NT	4%	30%	20%	26%	11%	9%
5. Student assessment results should not be used in evaluating professional personnel.	T	65%	26%	6%	0	0	3%
	NT	28%	17%	13%	26%	7%	9%
6. Student assessment results should not be used as one of several components in a total professional personnel evaluation system.	T	26%	32%	13%	13%	10%	6%
	NT	20%	17%	4%	35%	20%	4%
7. It is possible to build controls so that pupil assessment data will not be misused, either against pupils or professional personnel.	T	10%	42%	23%	13%	6%	6%
	NT	24%	37%	22%	7%	2%	9%
8. Alternative methods of assessment to norm-referenced testing should be used to assess students. (e.g. teacher evaluation, self-evaluation, simulation. etc.)	T	32%	52%	6%	3%	0	6%
	NT	43%	41%	4%	0	0	9%

SUMMARY: Educational Assessment

Most respondents recognized the problems with testing and responded negatively to the idea of using test results as the sole basis for educational decision making. Over 50 percent of all respondents felt pupil assessment was a necessary part of accountability but teachers did not feel the public wanted this kind of information as strongly as non-teachers. Non-teachers felt more strongly than teachers about using student achievement information in the evaluation of professional personnel. Both groups agreed that alternative methods of assessment should be used to assess student performance.

SUMMARY: Speaker Evaluation

The final section of the Survey asked participants to rank the speakers on a 5-point scale in two particulars: overall quality of presentation, scored from 1 (low) to 5 (high); and usefulness of information for small group discussion, scored from 1 (not useful) to 5 (highly useful).

There follows a report on the scores given the speakers. (Note that in some instances they were not "speakers"; they could not attend the Forum, and had their speeches read or their views expressed by others.) Speaker 1 is the one with the highest score on quality of presentation, and so on.

	Quality	Usefulness
Speaker 1	4.53	3.97
Speaker 2	3.75	3.42
Speaker 3	3.73	3.48
Speaker 4	3.58	3.21
Speaker 5	3.28	2.89
Speaker 6	3.25	3.00

	Quality	Usefulness
Speaker 7	3.21	2.93
Speaker 8	3.03	2.56
Speaker 9	2.81	2.52
Speaker 10	2.74	2.61

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